

833 lively jubilation. Comments are exchanged, jokes made, and even the young children share in the excitement whose motive they are well acquainted with. Sometimes even a small group of men, young women and children, take off in pursuit of the couple and watch the details of the operation through the branches, whispering among themselves and muffling their laughter. The principal actors do not appreciate these goings on at all. However, it is better to take part in them as well as to suffer the taunts and mockeries which greet their return to camp. It also happens that a second couple follows the example of the first and seeks, in their turn, the solitude of the bush. The Indians know and use two positions for coitus. We were not able to find out if they are practiced indiscriminately or if the choice depends on a rule. Whatever the case, besides the posterior position (toãtelosu, a1; inkolékénore, b1—to copulate from the rear) so frequent in South America, another position (uataãdige, b1) can be described as follows: the woman on her back, the man facing her, the right leg only between the legs of the woman and the left leg outside, so that the two superimposed bodies give the general form of an X.

[66]

PARENTS AND CHILDREN

593 The Nambikwara have few children. Couples without children
163 are not rare, one or two children seem to be a normal number, and
847 it is exceptional to find more than three in a household. Sexual prohibitions and the economic conditions on which they are based which also give rise to abortions, explain this situation. Apparently also Nambikwara formerly had the custom of beating to death the children whose mothers died during childbirth. According to the informants, this practice has been abandoned today.

853 The mother gives the breast lying on her side with the child
855 pressed against her. These feedings have no fixed time. The child nurses when he wishes and as much as he wishes. Weaning takes place towards the end of the first year, but up to the age of two or three the infant returns from time to time to the maternal breast.

[514] When a child eliminates at the camp site or inside the hut, the father or mother carefully buries the excrement by digging a small hole which is quickly filled with dry sand. A great deal of care is taken to prevent the children from soiling the camp site and the objects placed near them:

844 is buried in the camp. The child is bathed, and tiny washers made of tucum nut hull are placed on its ear lobes. The washer or ring is cut on an angle so that the two points eventually press through the lobe creating a hole. As the child grows, new washers are added. After a few weeks the child is given a beaded necklace, but it is not named, being known only as the child of so-and-so until puberty, when it receives a name. The Waklitsiu appear to have no avoidances following the birth of a child, although the Kitánrhu are said to practice a modified form of couvade. Twins are accepted with satisfaction. Illegitimate children are likewise accepted and are cared for by the girl's parents until she marries. No stigma appears to be attached to an unmarried mother; however, this attitude may be a recent development. Crippled or malformed babies are not killed, but usually die shortly after birth.

853 Children are nursed until they are 2 or 3 years old or until another child is born. Women in the band assist one another in nursing and taking care of the infants. If a woman should have two small infants, another woman who has lost her child will nurse one of them. Small children are carried on the hip of the mother, sitting on a strap which passes over the opposite shoulder of the mother. This strap which is made from embira bark or woven cotton is about 4 inches in width. Women evidently are accustomed to carrying heavy loads, for on many occasions the tiny women were observed carrying not only their child but also a huge burden basket full of firewood. When the child gets a few teeth it begins to chew on a piece of broiled meat. One morning while Kaoro and I were debating what to do with a rat which we had caught in a box trap the night before, neither of us having the courage to put our hand in the box, one of the missionaries suggested we give it to the Nambicuara. Kaoro then carried the box over to Julio's camp and gave it to one of his wives. Without any hesitation the woman put her hand in the box, pulled out the rat, banged its head on the box, and threw it on the coals of her fire. After the hair had been partially singed off she pulled it out, cut off its tail with her thumb nail, and gave it to her cowife's baby, who began sucking on it as if it had been a piece of candy. Then with her thumb

- 853 nail she opened the rat and threw the viscera and
 252 the rat on the coals. Within 15 minutes that
 rat was eaten, entrails and all, while Kaoro and
 I looked on in a state of horrified fascination.
 [862] Children thus begin by eating broiled meat and
 fish; pieces of sour, gritty manioc cake are given
 to them at a more advanced age.

PUBERTY

- 881 When a boy reaches the age of 14 or 15 he has
 [304] his upper lip and the septum of his nose pierced
 with a sharpened fibula of a monkey ("macaco-
 prego"). One man holds the boy's arms, another
 his head, while an older male relative performs the
 piercing. Small plugs of bamboo are then placed
 in the holes. The following night the shaman
 leads the band in singing and dancing. Food is
 prepared in large quantities and offerings are
 made to the ghosts who are believed to be present
 at the ceremony. The boy is now given a name
 [553] which he will keep throughout his life. If the
 boy's father is dead he will use his father's name.
 If the father is alive he will use the name of some
 dead member in his grandfather's generation. In
 this way names are passed from one generation to
 another. An important part of the boy's puberty
 ceremony is the ritual beating administered by the
 old men of the band. He is now permitted to
 take part in the singing and can be present when
 the sacred flutes are played in the flute hut.
 Although this creates an attitude of obedience to
 the older men, he still continues to be abusive
 toward the women of the band. His unmarried
 female cross cousins now begin to notice him and
 openly show their desire to go hunting with him.

- The puberty ceremony for girls is much more
 elaborate. After a girl has her first menses her
 father builds a small hut in the center of the camp,
 in which the girl is secluded. She must remain
 in this hut day and night and is attended by her
 [202] female relatives. The chief then calls all members
 of the band together, even sending messengers to
 distant hunting parties. When the band is united
 the chief organizes a hunt in which all the men
 take part, and they must remain away from the
 [251] camp until the moon is full. While on the hunt
 they accumulate a great quantity of smoked meat.
 When the moon is full, the men send a messenger
 to the camp to whom the women give some of the

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752 They spread saliva on bãanêcedutú sores with the palm of the hand. They squeeze insect bites between two fingers.

757 Those suffering from fever go quietly into a corner, when they do not leap into running water. They eat nothing as long as the seizure lasts.

In the village on the Juina River there was an old Indian of about sixty. He was sad and prostrate and was not cheered by our gifts. He would put his hands to his head to show that it was aching. A lad who seemed [251] to be his son judging by the extreme affection he bestowed on the old man, contrary to the other Indians, kept offering him honey with water. Each time the old man would turn away. In the afternoon, his condition not having improved, he called the boy and said something to him.

The lad grasped the man's head in his hands and put his mouth against the nostrils, sucking hard. It seems that this suction which he repeated later was helpful, for the old man became more expansive.

[Fig. 41]

853 Childbirth must be easy, considering how poorly the foetus is nourished. The Indian women, when they do not have sufficient milk, take a draught of water in their mouth and put their lips onto those of the baby, transferring the liquid in a nourishing kiss.

844 I wanted to know how they cut the umbilical cord and showed several Indians who were more outgoing and intelligent--Damasceno, Nuleke, Krikriceknerá--a drawing in a book that showed a foetus with its attachments. From Damasceno's replies I understood that the mother cuts the cord with her teeth and hides the placenta under some leaves.

This piece of information obviously remains subject to revision.

531 Drawings by the Indians of the Serra do Norte, though rudimentary, reveal some interesting motifs emancipated from animal forms.

The circle, triangle and square are drawn in black on the surface of some gourds.

[532] [252] Snakes and saurians are sometimes drawn sketchily(1)